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ABSTRACT

This paper proposes minimum curricula and the foundations for future curriculum unification in teaching archeology, library science, and museology at the graduate level in Brazil, in view of current cultural and legal difficulties that hamper a radical and rapid transformation in implementing such a proposed curriculum. Background information leading to the unified curriculum proposal include: (1) discussions of the current role and limitations of the information scientist in Brazil; (2) limited access to information by the mass population; (3) state regulations and restrictions; and (4) the need for unification of, and participation by, those in the profession. (11 references) (CGD)

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THE ROLE OF PROFESSIONALISM IN CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT FOR INFORMATION PERSONNEL: THE CASE OF BRAZIL

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1. INTRODUCTION

In Brazil, the library profession has been critisized for excessive attachement to the technical and administrative processes living aside its social and political functions (we can affirm that up to a certain degree this phenomenon is common to the 3rd world countries).

The problems derived from the cultural and technological dependence of the 3rd world countries; the pressing need for rationalization of the processes to a better advantage of the scant available resources; coupled with the increasing sophistication and constant diversification of the information demand from the several layers of the population, bring about from the professions of the area a deep envolvement in the process of awareness of the problematics.

Nowadays, we feel that the professionals are not hired to apply already pre-established technical knowledge in structured pattern of library organisation but, on the contrary, they are hired to participate in a broader creative process. The institution ask from the profession a larger envolvement in the research and

decision making cycle towards solution alternatives of the various social problems where the libraries and information unities play an interdependent and specific role.

Frequently, the professional has to act, thus, taking the risk of an abrupt break of his own well established ortodoxies in his professional formation and praxis.

In several countries the change of trends led to deep splits as well as to irreconciliables postures between conservative librarians and avant-gard information scientists. The conservative librarians keep themselves attached to rigid codes and rules and the latter are fascinated by technologies not always adaptable to the current social reality.

In Brazil - a country without a strong library tradition - this assimilation happened in a less conflictive manner, at the elite level, but unhappily in a very slow way in relation to the practical consequences of the process.

Today, we see that the new ideas of interdisciplinarity, the new concepts of information science, the adoption of automated process as well as the debates over the social issues that which envolve the generation, processing and dissemination of information are making dynamic, at international level, the production of research and scientific works, making controversial the ideas presented at seminars and congresses (these ideas are slowly beeing incorporated to the academic jargon) and are pushing forward a strong modification in the behavior of the professional in the executive level.

Twenty years of dictatorship did not stop the updating of the administrative structure of the Brazilian society. But, indeed, they inhibited the scientific and academic apprisal of the

relationship professional/society. Traditionally, in most countries, including Brazil, the librarians, archivists and museologists are not part of those groups which are politically and ideologically linked or interested in the social struggle. Quite the contrary, the excessive centralization of the libraries and information centres in the hands of the Government make forcebly the professional attached to the official burocracy making them conditioned to a conservative, passive and even alienated attitude, apart from the interests of their users and communities.

The social phenomena of the scientific information, demonstrated by the theories of Karl Popper, Ludwig von Bertalanffy, Georges Anderla, by the structuralists and holistics, brought about the inavoidable point of the need for a better personnel trainning which will make them able to interfere satisfactorilly in the methodology of production and the use of knowledge.

The document register (in any format, or material it exists), demand a degree of excelence in its production in order to be transmitted and absorbed.

Hence, its revolutionary social action will depend upon capability of organisation, retrieval and dissemination according to the natural laws or that regulated by the market.

The concept of the information professional as the "filter" between the documentary mass and the users needs, according to the cost-benefit analysis and its social utility, imposes itself in the formation of specialized manpower.

The international relations (specially when it comes to the information and service industry), the priviledged issues, the problematics of the transfer of technology, the implication of prices and costs, and national sovereignity as well as the

recognition of information as a sine qua non right of the human being and the adoption of the necessary mechanism to overcome the existing differences to the access to the informational records according to the social levels are key components of the actual professional concern.

2. THE LIMITS OF CHANGE AND ISSUE OF CORPORATIVISM

As we are aware, the social structures are nothing but the reflection of the power structure. The modern society, in the underdevelloped countries, created socially unfair and even cruel super-structures. Nevertheless, this super-structures can also reflect social conquest, and developments to a few. When it comes to the right to information, we see that the existing policies are extremely unfair, permiting a few to be priviledged (the governmental elites, the caste of faculty members, the scientists and urban middle class), these castes have access to information through governmental specialized and university libraries.

The mass population, generally, does not have a network of public and school libraries - we also stress that the population have not access to education, healthy service and housing - nothing that we can consider minimal condition to guarantee a process of civilization which will lead to a satisfactory quality of life.

It is obvious that the social desequilibria affects the informational umbalance. This creater a ethic problem to the new concept of professionalism.

Which social pushes should the profession follow?

Which strategies should it devellop to change the unjust proportion of access to information?

How to establish professional structures which would be able to solve these problems and to conquer spaces favorable to the users?

It is obvious that a profession that does not contribute to the change of the status quo (while other sectors of the society struggle to overcome the existing inequalities), a profession stigmatized by its excessive dependance to the Establishment, cannot hope for a public recognition and high status. It may even conquer a few priviledges conceded by the existing power structure but not necessarily the acknowledge of its usefulness by the community.

Traditionally, the formation and the professional practice were always excessively regulated and dominated by the State. The state controls the basic curriculum as weel as the practice of the profession by establishing laws and rules. These laws and rules reflect some advancements but hamper the progress and inhibit the search for alternative solution. The profession of librarians, archivists and museologists is duly regulated in Brazil and there exists the approved minimum curriculum for each of these professions, sanctioned by Federal Board of Education while of the Secretary of Labor supervises the existing Federal and Regional Boards of Librarianship, Arquives and Museuns. These boards have as the principal objective to supervise the professional rights.

Actually, the profession of Information Scientist does not exists legally in Brazil, but only a faculty title, which was given to librarians or other professionals in the area, after taking the master degree course in the Information Science at IBICT/UFRJ(*).

(*) As it was explained in other paper presented in this Pre-Seminar "The Harmonization of Education Programmes in the Information Areas in Brazil" - the formation of the professional is at graduate level while the Post-graduation level Courses provide academic and scientific qualification.

Although, at the first hand, we may look as legal and privilegious situation, the negatives consequences are discribed below:

- the curricula are very rigid, reflecting the country (almost a continent) as being an abstraction and not a reality. They are always legging behind, when compared to the social and professional dynamics;

- the Boards are not anthonomous. They cannot discuss and propose solutions to the problems of the informatization of the society, neither to analyse and accredit curricula. They limit themselves to reinforce the laws concerning the hiring of qualified professional by the public organisations.

What is left to the librarians, archivists and museologists is to preach in the classroom, workshop, congress, and professional associations. Only nowadays the class is thinking of creating independent unions as well as joining other professional, political and social organisations. The image of the librarian, defending values and priviledges, inherent to the middle-class, in name of the state (the boss) is already being questioned, specially by the underdevellopped countries.

Nevetherless, the administrative structures of several countries - specially Brazil - , favours the profession corporativism, i.e., a formal organisation that establishes a "marked reserve" for those who hold professional diplomas on specific areas. They emphasize the principle that we are stronger when united, hence the stronger profission are able to get through specific laws advantages and priviledges that are not always of global interest of the society, while the new professions try to obtain recognitions in the same pattern without really understand or care about the social and economic duplication of its acts. The excessive proliferation of professions brings serious problems to the

management of the production and services in the society as well as to the informational area.

Behind the façade of several denominations one fells the existence of serious conflicts of overlaping of tasks, of indefinitio of functions giving way to struggles in relation to description and attribution of profession pratice.

How to overcome the existing straight-jackets of the curriculum minimum legislation and the professional corporativism?

Probably, the only viable solution is the formation and ricling of human ressources, in order to facilitate the development of research aimed at finding solutions to the problems of information field. This will lead to transformation of the institutions and the services they render into useful and socially just entities.

In relation to the formal difficulties one encounters to make radical and revolutionary transformation in the school curricula (for neither the society disrobes easily of its prevailing practices nor the profession give away their suppose privailing rights), there is the need for an informal change, a subliminar change, a change in depth and not of form. This change should happen in the behavioral, postural and ideologic scope - this change should be understood into broader and theorethical, sistematic and intersdisciplinary formulation - as well as in more modern, flexible and socially involved professional techniques.

Our task should not only be performed in the library science schools, archive and museum schools but above all, by the enlightened strata of the profession. We must democratize the participation of the interested segments in the process, bringing to it professional and faculty members of other areas, as well as the users. They should also participate in the debate as well as in the process of applying for more finantial resources and

and administrative renewal in our institutions, making available the documentation service unities for the co-administration with the representatives of the communities.

In the specific case of the school system it is necessary that the lecturers up date their teaching methods, that they open space for the students participation in the critical evaluation of the informatological phenomena. They should overcome the university/ corporation gap, proposing solutions and focuses to problems that would favour a socially just evolution in the use of information issue.

Taking the Brazilian case, we conclude, from the preaching of their well-known leaders that we need to adjust or conciliate the maintance . of a humanistic and cultural basis in the formation of present professional structure, while we intend to devellop instruments and work norms more viable to the country's situation.

The unification of the several professionals that perform their task in the area of information (this unification should begin by the arquivist, librarian and museologist through an unified school programme and later on through unified profissional institutions)would stainghten actions in favour of defense of the society interests in the informational field. These are, really, our ultimate professional interests.

3. UNIFIED CURRICULUM PROPOSAL

This unified curricula proposal directed to the graduation course, in the field of Archive, Library Science and Museology, recognize the present cultural and legal difficulties that hamper a radical transformation. Firstly, it can be considered timid and conservative. Nevertheless it contains a possible alternative so far as it follows the existing legislation (minimum curricula and professional laws). It directs the efforts to the unification of the previously mentioned areas that so far are focusing the common issues randomly and even in conflicting ways.

This propposal results from a systematic work starting from the recommendation of a task force that, by invitation of the Federal Government, present suggestions aimed at the common treatment for the preservation and use of the museums, archives and governmental documental holdings (3). The group final conclusion led to the need for a joint work of the 3 areas, in the benefit of the users.

The below preliminary version of the propposed for a unified curriculum was developed by the students of the discipline "Methodology of Library Science Teaching", as part of the Master Course in Library Science, at the Library Science & Documentation Department, of the University of Brazil, 1st semester 1987, under our supervision.

The starting point were the guidelines provided by IFLA (4) that supported the present Pre-seminar. We also took into consideration the specific Brazilian documentation as well as a former propposal written by Peter-Haward Williams, for Unesco, in 1974.

We have to emphasize that we also took into account two market researches, sponsored by our Department, who took care to utilize proved and well established scientif methodology. These researches studied the employer spectation in relation to the professional skills and capability of the professional graduated from our library science department (1,11).

The researches were carried out during the 1985 (first) and 1986-1987 (the second). Of the utmost importance we consider the Special Committee for the Conservation of the Document Holdings Report (3). This Committee was established by the Public Administration Board. The report evalated the importance of the information and the documents in the Brazilian Public Administration.

We took pains to invite leading archivists and museologists linked to professional association and boards in order to discuss their minimum curricula and the foundations for a future curriculum unification.

PRELIMINARY PROPOSAL FOR UNIFIED TEACHING OF ARCHIVOLOGY, LIBRARY SCIENCE AND MUSEOLOGY AT THE GRADUATION LEVEL IN BRAZIL. (8 Semesters at least).

Common basic cycle

- History of Science and Culture
- Introduction to Management
- Introduction to Library Science, Archivology, Museology and Information Science.
- Portuguese Language
- Foreign Language (English or French or German, etc).
- Studies of Brazilian Problems.

Common Professional Cycle

- Research Methodology
- Documentary Languages
- Information Retrieval
- Planning and Management of Information Systems
- Documentary Informatics
- Telematics

LIBRARY SCIENCE	ARCHIVOLOGY	MUSEOLOGY
- Library Science and Society	-Archives & Society	-Museum Society
-History of Books and Libraries	-History and Organization of the Brazilian Political Instituons	-Genealogy, Heraldics and Esfragística
-Users Studies	-Genealogy and Heraldic	-Bibliographical formats (tridimensional materials, realia, maps, ancient documents, etc.)
-Record Formats (Books,Periodicals, Mutimidia,Databases, etc.)	-Record formats (manuscripts,maps, etc.)	
-Reference and Bibliography Sources	-Bibliography, records, files, inventories	- Museography
-Publishing and Reprography	-Publishing and Reprography	-Organization of Knowledge
-Information Netwoorks and Services	-Organization of Knowledge	-Paleography
-Users Services	-Paleography	-Preservation & restauration
- Organization of Knowledge (Classification,etc.)	-Presewagion and Restauration	-Museum organization
-Reference(Information Transfer-Dissemination)	- Archive Organization	
-System analysis applied to Information Unities		
-Library Organization		

The above list is only a suggestion of general topics to be rearranged or grouped into real disciplines. Their study is not mandotory and the students can have the choice of selecting disciplines from one or of the three areas at their will.

4. FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS

This preliminary proposal is going to be submitted to discussion and enrichment, step by step. We plan to present it during the 14th Brazilian Congress of Librarianship and Documentation to be held in Recife (State of Pernambuco) this coming September.

We hope that we will be able to receive enough ideas and new subsidies to a better evaluation and improval of the proposal.

In the near future, the Ministry of Education will spons or a national seminar aimed at sharing the ideas with specialists, representatives of professional associations and Brazilian authorities. We hope that this proposal will be improved in such a way that we will be able to formulate a final proposal to be submitted to a larger audience.

We are sure that the unification of these areas will result in advantages and positive consequences.

From the users point of view the difficulties that they have to face when they look for information (usually scattered in archives, libraries and museums) will be solved.

The management of information unities will improve greatly because they will be able to rationalize the documental and information sector, through the establishment of principles,

methods and complementary services in the organization of systems and services.

From the educational point of view there will be an enlargement of the space for research with the area interaction, hence, there will be an unification of technical vocabulary, allowing a better communication between specialists and even users.

There will be an improvement in the utilization of human resources since there will be an improvement in the documental feeding of the society.

We feel that it is easier to reach an integration starting from the formation of the professional then after his graduation.

The proposal starts from the principle that there are common points in the three areas thus there will be a need for a common starting point as defined in the original preliminary proposal that we plain to examine and discuss with you.

The proposal aims at a deeper and viable cooperation.

We do not intend to create only one profession. The three professious will go on existing as it is but in the welding of common points. We will share efforts and we will form professionals equipped with better perspective and able to create conditions for the progress.

Instead of fragmented professions we will have unity as only way of professional stranghtening as a way of lobbying for our reinvidications and resulting in real benefits for our profession.

The political efforts will be noticed with the increase of status of the information professional.

This common basis in the formation of the profissional will give us move flexibility and interprofissionality in the way for continuing education.

We are utterly convinced that professionalism means a full understanding and engagement in the social question that rules the existence of the profession as well as its usefulness and its capacity for transforming the society. It is indispensable of a mobilizetion of the professionals of the three areas in order to be the keepers of the higher and most legimited interests of the community. They should inspire the limits and the range of the rights and duties of the profession. There is no such thing as professional ethic without this declaration of faith, this unity of proposal, this joint efforts and common ideologies. If not, the profissional will be alienated and will be similar to an ivory tower, with weak foundations and will colapse soon.

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